

Key Insights from the National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants

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Introduction

- The Administration for Community Living's (ACL) National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants (NSOAAP) is the leading source of information on recipients of Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III services.
- This nationally representative survey assesses participant characteristics, service use, health and well-being, and service experiences to evaluate program effectiveness and inform program planning across the Aging Network, annually.

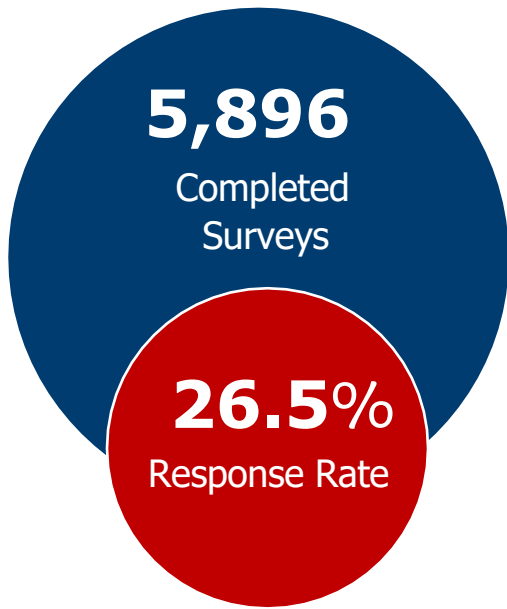
OAA Title III Services Assessed in the NSOAAP



Methods

- Sample:** A nationally representative, two-stage sample design. A stratified sample of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), followed by random selection of service recipients within the AAAs. Data were collected from 5,896 service recipients from 270 AAAs.
- Data Collection:** A sequential multi-mode survey of web (Caregivers only), paper, and telephone followup between May and September 2024.
- Analyses:** All descriptive analyses were weighted to provide nationally representative results for each service. Individuals may receive more than one service, so results could not be combined across services. Only results for individual services or ranges across services are displayed.

270
Area
Agencies
on
Aging



Key Insights

Characteristics of Participants

- Most participants were women (**66% to 84%**).
- More than half (except caregivers), were age 75+ and had annual household incomes below \$30,000.
- Caregivers were younger, with only **32%** age 75+. Caregivers also had higher annual incomes, with **55%** reporting \$40,000 or higher.

Health and Well-Being

Many participants experience multiple chronic conditions and functional limitations.

Medical Conditions:

- More than **60%** of service recipients and care receivers (as reported by the Caregiver) had 6 or more medical conditions, except for Congregate Meals recipients (47% had 6 or more conditions).
- The most common medical conditions across service types included high blood pressure, arthritis or rheumatism, eye or vision conditions, and high cholesterol.
- Alzheimer's or dementia was highest among care receivers at **62%** versus **6% to 18%** for other service recipients.

Activities of Daily Living

- 66%** of care receivers had difficulties with 3 or more Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) (as reported by the Caregiver) versus **10% to 33%** for other service recipients.

Service Use

Many participants relied on Title III services over multiple years to meet ongoing needs.

- More than half of participants received services for less than 2 years, except Congregate Meals and Transportation services which were accessed for a longer period of time.

Food Security and Risk of Malnutrition

While Home-Delivered Meals and Congregate Meals services may help mitigate the nutritional consequences of limited resources, food insecurity reflects the financial constraints many older adults face in obtaining food outside nutrition services.

- Across services, **13% to 33%** of participants were food insecure and **12% to 24%** of participants were at risk of malnutrition.
- Case Management service recipients experienced the highest rates of both food insecurity (**33%**) and malnutrition risk (**24%**).
- 68%** of Home-Delivered Meals and **44%** of Congregate Meals recipients indicated the services made them feel more secure about having food.

Social Connection and Companionship

Social connection is an important aspect of healthy aging and overall well-being.

- Caregivers were more likely to report they lacked companionship (**64%**) and experienced feelings of isolation (**61%**)—more than any other service recipients.

Aging in Place and the Benefits of Services

Supporting older adults' ability to remain in their homes is a central outcome of Title III services.

- 88% to 95%** of participants indicated that it is very important for them or their care receiver to be able to **stay in their current home** for as long as possible.
- For 4 out of 5 services, **93% to 97%** of participants said the **services helped them continue living independently** in their homes and communities.
- Congregate Meals recipients were less likely to say that the service helped them live independently (**75%**). Because recipients of this service reported having better health and physical functioning than other service types, it is possible that they may rely on the service more for socialization.
- Caregivers:
 - 74%** of Caregivers reported that they were able to care for their loved one longer because they received caregiver support services.
 - 36%** of Caregivers said their care receiver would not be able to continue living in the same residence without the Caregiver receiving services.
 - 34%** of Caregivers said their care receiver would be living in a nursing home without the Caregiver receiving services.

Rating of Services

- Participants consistently reported high satisfaction with the services they received.
- Between **86% and 95%** of participants rated services as Excellent, Very Good, or Good.
- 92% to 96%** would recommend the services they received.

Discussion

- The 2024 NSOAAP findings highlight the critical role of Title III services in meeting the needs of service recipients who are older, economically vulnerable adults with chronic conditions and functional limitations.
- The results underscore ongoing risks of food insecurity, malnutrition, and social isolation, especially among higher-needs groups such as Case Management recipients, Caregivers, and those living alone.
- Participants view these services as highly beneficial to their health and quality of life. Title III services are also central to supporting aging in place: most participants strongly value remaining at home and report that services help them stay independent.
- Caregiver Support services are especially impactful, helping sustain caregiving and delaying or preventing institutionalization.



Key Takeaways

- OAA Title III services are essential for helping older adults live safely and independently in their communities.
- Programs connect participants to multiple supports, strengthen caregiving, and promote independence through nutrition, transportation, and case management services.
- Services reach individuals with significant health, functional, and economic needs.
- Participants report consistently high satisfaction with services.
- The NSOAAP provides critical national data to inform policy, program improvement, and planning for an aging population.